

HYLAND LAKES PARISH NEWS

March 2018

Elcho Congregational UCC/Kempster Congregational UCC

*No matter who you are or where you are on
life's journey you are welcome here!*

PASTOR'S CORNER

Then he said to Thomas, "Put your finger here and see my hands. Reach out your hand and put it in my side. Do not doubt but believe." John 20-27

Poor, doubting Thomas. He has gotten a bad rap for centuries. The other disciples had seen the risen Jesus, they had seen the nail scars on his hands and had seen the scar on his side. Jesus had already proven himself to be who he said he was to everyone else. Thomas has said he will not believe that Jesus has risen from the dead without the very same proof everyone else had. But because they had already come to believe and Thomas, who was "tardy to the party" had not, everyone has called him "Doubting Thomas."

Are we any different? Don't we demand proof of the existence of the Holy One ourselves? Haven't we said "Lord, if you really answer prayers, answer mine?" Haven't we doubted when we don't get the answer to our prayer we expect?

I have certainly been a doubter many times. There are so many things that just don't really make sense, so many things that are hard to believe without seeing, so many hard times when God seems so far away. It is perfectly ok to question and doubt. Jesus never reproached Thomas for doubting—he just let him touch and see.

As spring approaches (finally!), we begin to see the hazy green budding of the trees and the buttercups sprouting up through the thawing ground. We see the tapped maple trees that will yield that awesome homemade syrup that Mrs. Butterworth just can't touch. The ice begins to melt and soon we will see the water and grass again. And we know that the resurrection is real.

So if you find yourself doubting, don't worry. God expects it. God made us to be curious people. Search for your answers and deepen your faith.

*Blessings,
Dana*



- . . . To those who keep our sidewalks and parking lot plowed and shoveled.
- . . . To those who invite others to church and church activities.
- . . . To all who make our visitors feel welcomed.
- . . . To those who work diligently to make our church finances transparent.
- . . . To those who work hard to make Men's Club Dinners successful.
- . . . To those who pray for others.
- . . . To our Christian Ed. committee for their work with Messy Church.
- . . . To those who donate food and/or work to the food pantry.
- . . . To Kris, Paul, and Mary Sue for their work on the newsletter.
- . . . To those who work to find solutions to problems.
- . . . To those who pray for our churches, members and pastor.

NORTHWEST ASSOCIATION ANNUAL CONFERENCE

Annual conference will take place on April 21st at First Congregational UCC, 310 Broadway Street, Eau Claire, Wisconsin on Saturday, April 21st from 9:30am to 3:30pm. The cost is \$10. The registration deadline is Friday, April 13th. Each church is allowed two delegates in addition to the pastor. Please let Pastor Dana know if you are interested in attending.

It is with great joy we announce that Dr. Heather Ann Moody will be our keynote speaker. Dr. Moody is an enrolled member of the Ho-Chunk Nation of Wisconsin and an assistant professor of American Indian Studies at UW-Eau Claire where she teaches a variety of subjects within the discipline. She has a doctorate in education with an emphasis on teaching and learning. Dr. Moody has presented at national and regional levels on the topic of Native American curriculum. She has lead Domestic Intercultural Immersion experiences to Pine Ridge Reservation and this spring to northern Wisconsin Ojibwe communities. Dr. Moody also serves as a co-advisor for the Inter-Tribal Student Council organization at UW-Eau Claire. Her topic will be Getting to Know Our Neighbors, Past and Present. The Black River Falls, Hocak UCC, has been invited to share their ministry and experiences as well. You won't want to miss these presentations!

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

BIBLE STUDY

We are currently discussing Sr. Joan Chittister's book *The Gift of Years: Growing Older Gracefully*. Come join us on Mondays at 1:30 p.m. to join the discussion.

MESSY CHURCH



On March 18th our meeting was our largest ever: we had 6 children and 11 adults—3 children and 4 adults were first time attenders! We focused on Easter. We heard the Easter story, played jelly bean bingo, created a picture of the crucifixion site, and learned a new song. We enjoyed an “April Fool’s” Dinner of cake (meatloaf frosted with mashed potatoes), veggies with dip, Salisbury steak and mashed potatoes with gravy (brownie and ice cream with chocolate sauce), and fruit punch (jello with a straw). Our fellowship time was great.

Messy Church is an activity that has the potential to increase our ministry to the community and perhaps even add members, but it can only be successful if it is supported. Come and see, hear, taste and learn what our faith is all about in a different way. There is something for everyone to learn about how God works in us and through us.

Many thanks to our awesome Messy Church team, who donate time, ideas, food, and supplies each month to make this program possible: Olive DuBey, Sue Brautigam, Sue Mackowski, Jane Wagner, Linda Klopfer, and Dave Schindler.

MINISTRY OPPORTUNITIES

GRIEF AND LOSS SUPPORT GROUP

Grief and loss are a part of life. Sometimes we think we have finished but then an anniversary comes or something reminds us of the loss again. Our next meeting is on April 7th from 10 am-12 noon. This group is free and open to the community. Sue Mackowski, Bereavement Specialist and Consultant will lead the group. For additional information call her at 715-275-5399 or Pastor Dana at 715-610-1888.

WOMEN’S FELLOWSHIP NEWS

We will meet on Wednesday, April 4th at 1:00 p.m. All ladies of both churches are welcome as well as any visitors.

MEN’S CLUB NEWS

Friday Fish Fry

This month’s Friday Fish Fry will be on April 13th, with fried or baked fish, shrimp, fries, coleslaw and Culvers’ frozen custard. Doors open at 4:00 p.m. with dinner service beginning at 5:00 p.m. Cost is \$10-\$12 depending on your choice of meal.

End of the Month Dinner

Come join us for our German Night Dinner on be April 25th. The menu will be Pork Roast and kraut *or* Sauerbraten and red cabbage, potato, salad

bar, dessert, and coffee. Doors open at 4:00 p.m., serving begins at 5:00 p.m.

NEW OPPORTUNITY

We are looking for a new opportunity to help us work and/or play together as a community of faith. Please send any ideas you might have to Pastor Dana's e-mail or put it in her mail box. Once we have a list of ideas we will have everyone vote for their favorite. In other churches I've been a part of we've had game nights at church, gone to ball games, had picnics, and done workdays at church camp. The possibilities are endless!

FOOD PANTRY NEWS

The Food Pantry has volunteer spots available. Please prayerfully consider if you can fill one of them.

Steering Committee

Communications Coordinator: The Communications Coordinator will be the general contact for all pantry matters. The purpose of this position is to have one central person who knows what's happening in all areas of the pantry in order to keep things running smoothly and cohesively. This person does not necessarily need to be at the pantry every day, but will be available via phone and make contact with the other coordinators on a weekly basis or as needed.

Intake Coordinator: The Intake Coordinator will be responsible for scheduling volunteers to pick up and/or accept donations coming into the pantry. This includes, but is not limited to the Salvation Army donations, Kwik Trip, Walmart Direct Agency Pickup, Copp's bakery, Elcho Bakery, Little Caesars, Elcho Farmers Market, potatoes and any food drive donations. This person will serve as the contact for any questions or scheduling regarding incoming donations so as to eliminate overlap and duplication of duties.

Distribution Coordinator: The Distribution Coordinator will be responsible for overseeing the operation of the pantry and directing the volunteers on distribution days. They will also make sure emergency bags are prepared. This person will serve as the contact for any issues regarding distribution.

Secretary: Records the minutes of all meetings and distributes the minutes to Committee members and Board of Director members, keeps the organization's permanent records, provides thank-you letters as needed, for donations which are not monetary.

Treasurer: Maintains financial records and invoices, pays the bills, keeps copies of bills paid and records monetary donations. Prepares a monthly

financial report for the Steering Committee and Board of Directors. Prepares the budget.

Meeting Manager: The Meeting Manager will be responsible for creating and distributing the agenda for the monthly steering committee meeting as well as running the meeting. This person will also be responsible for attending the board of directors meeting as a steering committee representative.

Publicity: Communicates with the media to publicize events, community support, pantry information and fund raising; makes the community aware of distribution days.

Fund Raising Chairperson: Solicits financial contributions, coordinates fund drives and contact as many businesses and organizations as possible for financial donations.

Grants Chairperson: Applies for grant money

Volunteer Coordinator: Works with individuals and religious and community organizations, schedules the organizations and individuals involved in food distribution and get assistance if there are insufficient volunteers for distribution

Stock Manager: Checks dates of stock, moves stock from storage area to pantry, supervises volunteers who stock shelves and unload trucks, sorts donations, and purchases necessary items.

FOOD PANTRY NEEDS

Canned Pasta (Ravioli)	Canned Fruit	Pasta
Peanut Butter	Soup	Toothpaste
Bar Soap		

CHURCH WEBSITE

A new year is rapidly approaching, so more donations will be needed to fund the website, which costs \$35 per month. If you would like to pay for a month, just mark your offering "for the church website." You can check out the website at elchokempsterucc.org

Our Facebook page is Hyland Lakes Parish. You can find announcements as well as sermons posted there. This page is for anyone who is looking for information about us.

AUTOMATION UPDATE

We have new email addresses at:

moderator@elchokempsterucc.org Currently Jeff Avery

Pastor@elchokempsterucc.org Currently Pastor Dana

clerk@elchokempsterucc.org Currently Gladys Miller

office@elchokempsterucc.org Currently Sue Brautigam

support@elchokempsterucc.org Currently David Schindler

The Church Council requests that all email Church correspondence with the individuals above be through the new email addresses so that the correspondence can be retained.

It's requested that all official digital information be forwarded to support@elchokempsterucc.org to be stored and access to the information assigned. If you have questions or need further information contact David Schindler.

PRAYER LIST

Bernie

Philip

Owen

Black Family

Sellmeyer Family

Andy

Kim

Hunter & Janet

Mackenzie

Younk Family

Messy Church

Our Enemies

First Responders

Those with addictions

Carol

Janet

Lauren

Diver Family

Tyler

Peter

Patti

Barb

Rinald & Family

Shut Ins

Our Snowbirds

Elected Officials

Service Members

Those who are anxious

Athon

Cody

Cap

Jeff

BJ

Rod

Ed

Bob

Coenen Family

Wagner Family



If you or someone else in the parish is sick or hospitalized please be sure to let me know. I am more than happy to visit. Hospitals cannot contact pastors unless patients specifically tell them to due to privacy rights.

COVENANT OF CONDUCT FOR ELCHO

In order for the congregation and the Church Council to deal effectively with various church issues, the following guidelines are to be followed:

1. All members affirm their right to express their opinions about the life and ministry of the congregation.
2. The congregation operates with a direct democracy form of government that allows members to share their opinions directly with the pastor, Church Council, other boards and committees, and at congregational meetings.
3. When members of the congregation express an opinion to a member of the Church Council or staff, the Council or staff person shall ask, "What would you like me to do with this information?"
4. If the member desires to have the information transmitted to the Church Council or staff, the member shall be invited to bring the information/opinion to the next Church Council meeting. The time and date shall be provided.
5. If the member **does not** wish to appear in person, the Church Council or staff member shall ask the member to use their name in reporting. If permission is **not** given, The Council or staff person shall respond by saying, "I'm sorry, but I will not be able to report this to the Church Council or staff since we do not deal with anonymous letters or comments."
6. If permission is given, the Church Council or staff person shall report the information/opinion to the Council and use the member's name.
7. At his/her discretion, a Church Council or staff member may ask that the member refer this issue to another Council or staff person for presentation.
8. Each issue shall be placed on the agenda if presented at a Church Council meeting and written in the minutes along with the action taken by the Council. Action may include: "Received as information," "Pastor and/or moderator to visit member and report at next meeting," etc.
9. Opinions may be shared in writing with the Church Council and staff and shall be handled in the above mentioned manner if the letter or statement is signed.

HOLY HUMOR

The Monastery of Silence was led by an ancient Abbott, who took the brothers' vow of silence very seriously. When Brother John entered the monastery and took his silence vow, the Abbot reminded him, "You are welcome here as long as you like, but you may not speak until I direct you to do so."

Brother John lived in the monastery for a full year before the Abbot said to him, "Brother John, you have been here a year now, you may speak two words."

Brother John said "Hard bed." So the Abbot got him a better bed.

The next year, Brother John was called by the Abbott. "You may say another two words, Brother John."

"Cold food," announced Brother John, so the Abbott promised the food would improve.

On his third anniversary at the monastery, the Abbott again called Brother John into his office. "You may say two more words today."

"I quit," announced Brother John.

"It is probably for the best," said the Abbott. "All you have done since you got here is complain."¹

¹The World's Greatest Collection of Church Jokes, Barbour Publishing, Inc., 2003



